



ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE MIDDLE EAST

c/o THE LODGE, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND.

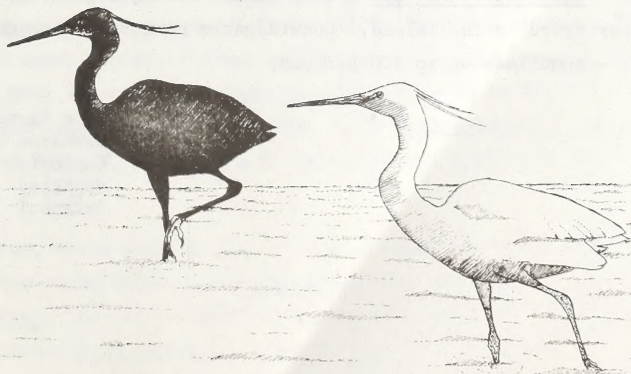
BULLETIN N°5

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EDITOR: A VITTERY

PRODUCTION: D J FISHER

Turkey provides the main focus for this Bulletin, and we are particularly happy to welcome contributions from two Turkish members of the Society who have been active in the Istanbul area. The Activity Report of the Society for the Protection of Wildlife provides an indication of the impressive advances being made in the country in the dissemination of information on birds and other forms of wildlife.



MARMARA ISLAND

Cenk Kaymas

Marmara Island lies at the western end of the Marmara Sea south of Tekirdağ on the Thrace shore but rather closer to the Erdek peninsular in the south. It is the largest island in the Marmara Sea measuring approximately 20km by 10km. The summers are very hot. There are large pine forests on one side and some olive groves but on the exposed parts it is bare and rocky. Most of the island is covered in low scrub.

In 1978 the writer spent the summer on the island and recorded 60 species of birds. Of these the most interesting were the following:

Black-necked Grebe Podiceps nigricollis : seen several times feeding close inshore.

Little Egret Egretta garzetta : a few were seen in the migration season.

Squacco Heron Ardeola ralloides : a few were seen in the migration season.

Eagle Owl Bubo bubo : the only bird seen was killed by a villager in the forested area.

Scops Owl Otus scops : fairly common; several nests found.

Alpine Swift Apus melba : very common and breeding in large numbers.

Bee-eater Merops apiaster : very common in the migrating season. I also found several nests but I do not think they are regular breeders.

Roller Coracias garrulus : a few in the migration season, but not common.

Red-rumped Swallow Hirundo daurica : very common; more than 40 nests found.

Red-backed Shrike Lanius collurio : very common in the migration season.

Sardinian Warbler Sylvia melanocephala : fairly common; a few nests found in scrub.

Blue Rock Thrush Monticola solitarius : a fairly common breeding bird.

Goldfinch Carduelis carduelis : very common during migration, but I do not think they breed in the island. Considerable numbers are caught by villagers for sale - sometimes up to 100 per day.

Cenk Kaymas
Barbaros Bulvarı
Kardeşler Apartmanı No:29 D2
Beşiktaş
İstanbul

ELEONORA'S FALCON - A NEW BREEDING SPECIES FOR TURKEY

Accompanying Cenk Kaymas's article about Mamara Island we also received a note from him telling us about his recent discovery of a breeding colony of Eleonora's Falcons Falco eleonorae in Turkey. Due to the rare and threatened nature of the species, the Council of OSME have decided not to publicise the site. Cenk found between 18 and 21 nesting pairs in the colony providing the first proof of the breeding of the species in Turkey.

WINTER IN ISTANBUL

Selim Somçag

In 1979/80 Turkey had a winter of unusual severity with more snow than in past years. The bad weather affected all bird species, especially seabirds which were driven into the Bosphorus. The following observations were carried out at a wooded area with adjacent grassland near Istanbul, on the Bosphorus, and at Lake Büyük, Çekmece.

In the grassland area a flock of 50 Goldfinches Carduelis carduelis was present throughout the winter, but disappeared on snowy days when they were replaced by a flock of Chaffinches Fringilla coelebs, which normally inhabited the woodland. The maximum count was 45 Chaffinches plus 8 Bramblings Fringilla montifringilla and 2 Linnets Acanthis cannabina.

In the woodland, there were maximum counts of 80 Great Tits Parus major, 20 Blue Tits P. caeruleus, 30 Blackbirds Turdus merula and 2 Treecreepers Certhia sp.

Among winter visitors were 38 Redwings Turdus iliacus roosting with 15 Blackbirds on a snowy day, and 8 Woodcocks Scolopax rusticola. A flock of 35 Hawfinches Coccothraustes coccothraustes was present all through the winter. In the city there were the usual flocks of Starlings Sturnus vulgaris (maximum count 2000+ in Şişli) and Grey Wagtails Motacilla cinerea (up to 25 in Şişli). The woodland was also the main roosting area of Hooded Crows Corvus corone cornix, Jackdaws C. monedula and Rooks C. frugilegus in the vicinity, with an estimated total of 2000 birds.

At the Bosphorus, there were maximum counts of 9000+ Black-headed Gulls Larus ridibundus, 1000+ Herring Gulls L. argentatus and 1000 Manx Shearwaters Puffinus puffinus. On the Kadıköy breakwater 200 Cormorants Phalacrocorax carbo and 300 Shags P. aristotelis roosted together. Single Black-throated Gavia arctica and Red-throated Divers G. stellata were seen; the latter already coming into summer plumage on 18th February. Great-crested Podiceps cristatus

and Black-necked Grebes P. nigricollis and Coots Fulica atra were present in small numbers and several terns Sterna sp (?sandvicensis - Eds.) were recorded after January.

Lake Büyük Çekmece, maximum counts were 450 Cormorants, 21 Great-crested, 170 Black-necked and 30 Little Grebes Tachybaptus ruficollis, 21 Coots and 200 Black-headed Gulls. There were also small numbers of Snipes Gallinago gallinago, Skylarks Alauda arvensis, Goldfinches and Reed Buntings Emberiza schoeniclus.

Selim Somçag
Yeniyol Sok 10/13
Şişli
İstanbul

NOVEMBER BIRDS AT BURDUR GÖLÜ

J S M Albrecht

Burdur Gölü is a saline lake at the western end of the Taurus Mountains in Southern Turkey. The lake is about 975 metres above sea level and is about 3½km long from north east to south west and 8km wide. The hills, which come down to the edge of the lake on each side, are covered in the main with Juniper scrub and are heavily grazed by sheep and goats. In parts the scrub has been cleared for cultivation, mainly of roses for perfume which is the speciality of the area. At each end of the lake there is a large area of alluvial marsh near the lake. The hills, the alluvial plain and the lake form three distinct areas for wildlife.

I had the good fortune to be based in Yarikoy, a village on the southern side of the lake, for the week 20th-26th November 1977. This gave excellent opportunity to explore the three main areas mentioned above as well as the smaller lake Yarisli Gölü some 15km to the south west. The original Yarikoy, built of straw and mud bricks with tiled roofs, was wrecked in the earthquake of 1971 but the new village is now built of concrete on an adjacent site and has electricity and piped water. The only inhabitants of the original village are the White Storks Ciconia ciconia which arrive in the spring and seem to have a nest on every ruin, and Jackdaws Corvus monedula. I was told that that the Storks are discouraged from nesting in the new village because they bring snakes to their young and these sometimes escape into the houses.

The lake is the first attraction to any visitor and it was alive with birds. By far the commonest were Coots Fulica atra and it was estimated that there were at least 80,000 of them present on 24th November. After Coots, White-headed Ducks Oxyura leucocephala were next commonest with an estimated 2-3,000.

There were also a few hundred Tufted Ducks Aythya fuligula, Pochards A. ferina and Black-necked Grebes Podiceps nigricollis and smaller numbers of Mallards Anas platyrhynchos, Gadwalls A. strepera, Pintails A. acuta, Wigeons A. penelope and Shovelers A. clypeata. Round the edge of the lake were small numbers of Lapwings Vanellus vanellus, Redshanks Tringa totanus and Green Sandpipers T. ochropus. There were also up to 200 Black-headed Gulls Larus ridibundus on and around the lake and two Herring Gulls L. argentatus were seen on the 24th.

On the rough ground next to the lake were large numbers of finches, mainly Linnets Acanthis cannabina, Goldfinches Carduelis carduelis and Chaffinches Fringilla coelebs. There was also a flock of at least 60 Red-fronted Serins Serinus pusillus on the 24th when 9 Bramblings F. montifringilla and a single Cirl Bunting Emberiza circlus were also seen in a mixed finch flock. Small numbers of Stonechats Saxicola torquata and Black Redstarts Phoenicurus ochruros were found in this area.

At the south west corner of the lake is a saline marsh fed by a sulphur spring. No wildfowl were seen here apart from a single Teal A. crecca on the 23rd, but this area attracted its own set of birds. There were at least 10 Water Rails Rallus aquaticus amongst the sedges. A single Moorhen Gallinula chloropus was seen near this area on the 22nd and there were over 50 Common Snipes Gallinago gallinago and small numbers of Green Sandpipers. There were two Moustached Warblers Acrocephalus melanopogon on the 22nd when a Grey Wagtail Motacilla cinerea was also seen. Meadow Pipits Anthus pratensis were present in moderate numbers. On the drier ground bordering the marsh were up to 60 Corn Buntings F. calandra and a single Skylark Alauda arvensis was twice seen. A Sparrowhawk Accipiter nisus, a female Hen Harrier Circus cyaneus and a Kestrel Falco tinnunculus hunted over the marsh while Peregrine F. peregrinus and Merlin F. columbarius were seen flying over.

One of the commonest trees on the alluvial deposits is Poplar Populus sp which forms small woods and provides a wind break round fields and shade near the villages. Here the Syrian Woodpecker Dendrocopus syriacus was very common. There are many irrigation ditches in these areas and 3 Woodcocks Scolopax rusticola were seen on a flooded field on the 20th when at least 2 Cetti's Warblers Cettia cetti were seen in the bushes by a stream. Other birds using this area in small numbers included Wrens Troglodytes troglodytes, Chiffchaffs Phylloscopus collybita, Robins Erithacus rubecula, Blackbirds Turdus merula, Song Thrushes T. philomelos, Long-tailed Tits Aegithalos caudatus, Blue Tits Parus caeruleus, Great Tits

P. major, Greenfinches C. chloris and Siskins C. spinus. Moles Talpa sp were also common here. Away from the villages the trees give way to open plains which are cultivated for cereals. Here 7 Great Bustards Otis tarda were seen on the 21st. They flew off to the south-east.

Round the villages themselves Collared Doves Streptopelia decaocto, Little Owls Athene noctua, Crested Larks Galerida cristata (which were also common along roadsides everywhere), Starlings Sturnus vulgaris, Magpies Pica pica, Jackdaw, Hooded Crow C. corone cornix and House Sparrows Passer domesticus were the common birds. Two Rooks C. frugilegus flew over Yariköy on the 21st - the only time this species was seen - and on the 24th an Imperial Eagle Aquila heliaca flew over mobbed by Hooded Crows.

The characteristic bird of the hills bordering the lake was the Rock Nuthatch Sitta neumayer. Up to 30 wild-type Rock Doves Columba livia were seen on the cliffs on the west side of the lake where Rock Sparrows Petronia petronia were present in moderate numbers. Here there was a Long-legged Buzzard Buteo rufinus on the 24th and an Imperial Eagle on the 26th. Jays Garrulus garrulus and Mistle Thrushes T. viscivorus occurred in small numbers in the scrub and trees. On the border between the alluvial area and the hills a single male Rock Bunting E. cia was seen on the 23rd and a male Finsch's Wheatear Oenanthe finschii on the 25th.

There were many different birds round the villages and cultivations at higher altitudes some 10km from the lake. Round the village of Örencik to the west of the lake there were at least 15 Fieldfares T. pilaris, 30 Redwings T. iliacus and 10 Mistle Thrushes on the 26th. There were also small numbers of Sombre Tits P. lugubris and Coal Tits P. ater. Chaffinches and Goldfinches were present in moderate to large numbers with Bramblings and Serins S. serinus in small numbers. A female Bullfinch Pyrrhula pyrrhula was seen on the 25th and a single Siskin and 12 Yellowhammers E. citrinella on the 26th.

Yarisli Gölü was visited on 2 occasions when up to 100 Ruddy Shelducks Tadorna ferruginea were seen. Six Mute Swans Cygnus olor and at least 2 Curlews Numenius arquata were present on the 25th. In spite of the fact that Yarisli Gölü is also saline it appears to have a very different set of water birds to Burdur Gölü. The most obvious feature is the absence of Coots. On the 25th it had 130 Pochards, moderate numbers of Mallards, Teals and White-headed Ducks and small numbers of Tufted Ducks but on the evening of the 23rd there appeared to be many more ducks, including hundreds of Shovelers.



DOGAL HAYATI
KORUMA DERNEĞİ

Activity Report: April to June 1980

1. Nature and Child Week

Again in 1980 the society has jointly sponsored with the Building and Loan Bank the 'Nature and Child Week' which was celebrated during 26th-31st May. The various activities of this week are described below. An illustration contest with the theme 'Grown-ups and Children Who Destroy or Save Our Natural Resources' was opened to all children in the primary schools in the Istanbul area beginning 1st March and ending in May. Another contest for both amateur and professional cartoonists and caricaturists was also held on the same subject and during the same period of time. Between 30th March and 30th May stork count forms were distributed to all the primary schools in Turkey. The costs incurred in the printing of these forms was shared between the Building and Loan Bank and a gift from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. (Separately it should be noted that the Ministry of Education volunteered their services in the distribution both of the society's quarterly wall newspaper 'Nature News' to all of the lisés in the country and of stork count brochures to more than 46,000 primary schools.) Presently the results of this form and questionnaire, that is the number of pairs of storks, nests both in use and abandoned, and information on other wild animals, all according to geographic areas, are being tabulated.

On 26th May the general directorate of the Building and Loan Bank in a special ceremony in their conference room presented the financial awards to the top three winners of the caricature contest. Separately the society also presented them award plaques. At the time the bank gave the money gifts to the five top winners of the illustration contest the society gave to the top ten, T-shirts which had been printed with the emblem of this special week. On 30th May a slide show was presented in the bank conference room. 31st May the young artists of the twenty best illustrations in the contest were treated to a day's outing in Istanbul's Belgrade Forest. It was a day of fun and instruction on the local wildlife in the forest which concluded with a picnic provided by the bank.

2. Slide Shows

The society continued in 1980 its education programme of slide shows. In April all records were broken as the viewers for that month approached last year's total. In 1979 the twelve month viewers were approximately 10,000 individuals - the same number was recorded for only April of this year.

As a result of an agreement of co-operation between the society and the Ministry of Forestry, two society members, Cengiz Civa and Ömer Demirbaş were able to display materials of the society in the exhibition sponsored between 31st March and 4th April by the Adapazari National Forest Directorate. At the same time frequent slide shows were presented between 9am and 5pm in the Public Educational Centre. Through this means a total of 5,900 students and adults were able to learn the basic fundamentals of environmental protection through these education slide shows.

Between 27th March and 11th April Şahika Kayihan, co-ordinator of the society's educational programme was invited by the directors of the Izmir National Park and Ayvalik areas to present in this area and in Manisa, slide shows in numerous primary and secondary schools and also for groups of hunters.

The number of people seeing these shows totalled 4,127. In May a total of 130 students also had the opportunity to see the society's slides on trees and forests.

3. Other Activities

For 5th June, World Environment Day, the society had the honour to serve as consultants in the preparation of a programme for Turkish TV. After the programme members of our society in Ankara thanked the Ankara Science Group and our society.

Separately Şahika Kayihan of the educational committee was called to Ankara to participate in a TV children's programme in which she outlined the importance of conservation and the practical aspects of it.

Between 9th-15th June there was an exhibit of the winning entries of the contests during 'Nature and Child Week' and of the society's publications in the community hall of Ankara's Society of Art Appreciation. On 10th June Şahika Kayihan presented two slide shows, 'Sultan Wetlands' and the

'Waldrapp Ibis', and on the 15th June Ragip Esener, one of our members from Samsun presented an evening slide show of the natural resources and riches of Africa.

At the same time as these activities in Ankara the Kocaeli (Izmit) Amateur Art and Photograph Society acquainted people with the work of the society in an exhibit they sponsored in one of the city banks. They also showed some of the society's slide shows to 450 people.

4. Future Activities

The Society has continued to participate as a catalyst in the Waldrapp Ibis project in Birecik of the National Park Department and the ICUN (International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources). The society was represented in a meeting with Udo Hirsch of the ICUN in Ankara in January and it is hoped that a follow up meeting will be held in August.

The Educational Committee under the leadership of Şahika Kayihan is busy gathering material and data to help in the preparation of a series of 30 seven minute TV shows which the programme director of the Turkish TV Children's Department has requested from the society. These programmes will be designed to teach children the love, respect and conservation of Turkey's wildlife. It is hoped that Udo Hirsch can participate as a scientific/film consultant in the production of this co-operative educational venture which will begin shortly.

The excitement and success of the society's work is only matched by the enthusiasm and hard work we know lies before us as we tackle both short and long term challenges that face the cause of conservation in Turkey. Working together with all those who have a similar goal and with increasing financial contributions to help with our projects we are convinced that the quality of Turkey's environment in spite of growing problems will not decline but improve in the years ahead. We need your support.

William A Edmonds, Chairman

The Society for the Protection of Wildlife
PK 18, Bebek, Istanbul

July 1980

SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATURE IN ISRAEL

Another very active body in our area is the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel. The Society publishes a quarterly journal 'Israel - Land and Nature'. Vol. 5 No 2 (Winter 1979/80) contains an article by Yossi Leshem on Golden Eagles Aquila chrysaetos breeding near Jerusalem which was successful only as a result of a daily vigil by volunteers organised by the Society and paid for out of a special fund created to deal with emergency environmental and conservation issues. The Fund, called Keren Ha-tzvi (Gazelle's Horn), is used to supplement the activities of the official bodies such as the Nature Reserves Authority and the Environmental Protection Service in such fields as:

- Emergency action to save species or sites under immediate threat
- Research and survey to identify the above
- Activating volunteers and youth in safeguarding threatened species and sites
- Employment of guards and inspectors in sensitive regions.

As well as the protection of the Golden Eagles mentioned above, money has recently been made available to establish a breeding cage for Lappet-faced Vultures Torgos tracheliotus in Tel Aviv University. Contributions to the fund should be sent to the SPNI at 4 Hashfela St., Tel Aviv.

Eight posters have been printed depicting endangered wildlife. Sets are available at a cost of £3.50 (surface postage paid).

The Society also sells T-shirts with wildlife motifs, including one with Lappet-faced Vulture in flight, costing £3.50 (surface postage paid).

Articles on the need to protect raptors have been published in the Israel Army Journal, which has a wide circulation.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

With the recent publication of Volume 2 of The Birds of the Western Palearctic and work well advanced on Volume 3 (covering waders, gulls and terns), we are actively planning Volume 4 (auks to woodpeckers) and the final 3 volumes of the Passeriformes. As the first two volumes have made clear, knowledge of the western Palearctic avifauna varies enormously, ranging from species which have been so well-studied that it is often difficult to compress the information into the space available, to those where even the basic data are scanty or absent. The latter group includes those species which are found mainly in the

east or south of the region, and for many countries in these areas our knowledge of distribution is patchy or badly out of date. For such species there are many ways in which readers could help - not only on key points of identification (including voice) but in many cases on major aspects of their biology - habitat, movements, food, social pattern and behaviour, and breeding. It is quite impossible to list all the little-known species still to come, but a random sample might include Crowned and Lichtenstein's Sandgrouse Pterocles coronatus and P. lichtensteinii, Long-toed Pigeon and Laurel Pigeon Columba trocaz and C. dunoniae, Hume's Tawny Owl Strix butleri, Brown Fish Owl Ketupa zeylonensis, Golden Nightjar Caprimulgus eximius, Black-crowned Finch Lark Eremopterix nigriceps, Dupont's Lark Chersophilus dupont, Long-billed Pipit Anthus similis, Grey Hypocolius Hypercolius ampelinus, Canary Islands Stone Chat Saxicola dacotiae, Green Warbler Phylloscopus nitidus, Iraq Babbler Turdoides altirostris, Corsican Nuthatch Sitta whiteheadi and Rufous-backed Sparrow and Golden Sparrow Passer iagoensis and P. luteus - and many more could be added. If you have made a special study of (eg) the voice, breeding or behaviour of any of these, or other little known species, I should be delighted to hear from you, but even an isolated observation on some aspect of their biology may prove to be a valuable missing piece in the jigsaw. If your travels enable you to supply recent data on distribution (especially proved breeding) in many countries in the south and east (eg Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, the Cape Verde Islands) the Country Correspondents listed in Volume 2 will be pleased to hear from you or you can write direct to me. Full acknowledgement will be made.

Stanley Cramp
32 Queen Court, London, WC1N 3BB.

THREAT TO SALT LAKES IN CYPRUS

The Cyprus Ornithological Society is seeking support in combatting a possible threat to the salt lakes at Larnaca and Akrotiri in Cyprus, which it was rumoured were to be developed for agricultural or industrial purposes. These two lakes are important staging posts for migrating waterfowl, including flamingos, cranes, several species of wader and a number of ducks. The IWRB has written to the Director of the Cyprus Game and Wildlife Services urging that the Cyprus Government subscribe to the Ramsar Convention and stressing the suitability of both Larnaca and Akrotiri for designation as wetlands of international importance.

REVIEWS

African Handbook of Birds Series One, Volumes I and II:

Birds of Eastern and North Eastern Africa - C W Mackworth-Praed and C H F Grant, Longman Group Ltd., London and New York 1980. 1113 pages: 96 colour plates; 19 pages of black and white photographs. £25 and £30.

Volumes I and II of Mackworth-Praed and Grant's African Handbook were first published in 1952 and 1955 respectively and the second edition followed in 1957 and 1961. They have long since become collectors' items and difficult if not impossible to acquire so it is good news that the Longman Group has republished the second edition.

These two volumes which are part of the mammoth work: The African Handbook of Birds (six volumes) provided the first comprehensive bird reference work for the birds of east and north-east Africa and continue to be an essential point of reference for systematists and field ornithologists alike whether active in the region or interested in the adjoining countries of the Middle East.

The two volumes of the second edition have been reprinted without corrections or amendments but with two minor additions, one being the inclusion of two political boundary maps and the other a biographical note of the two authors, Captain Claude Henry Baxter Grant and Lt Colonel Cyril Winthrop Mackworth-Praed, OBE.

Most of the birds were illustrated and the text supported by distribution maps and vignettes. The illustrations, whilst often deficient by today's standards, have been adequately reproduced.

Don Parr

'Wildlife in Bahrain' - The report of the Bahrain Natural History Society for the years 1978 and 1979

This well produced second report of the Bahrain Natural History Society is something that the society can be proud of. The 112 page (A5 size) report ranges over a variety of subjects including an introduction to the vegetation of the island, (habitats, descriptions, checklist) and notes on some of the native butterflies and moths (Lepidoptera). This latter article is illustrated by a high quality full colour double page plate depicting 15 species. Of

interest to ornithologists is a checklist of the islands birds (35 pages), which includes a review of all records during 1978 and 1979. In addition there is a fascinating diary of events compiled for the two years, summarising weather conditions, bird movements and flowering plants, etc. Apart from the Lepidoptera plate the report is illustrated by a colour plate of the Arabian Oryx (Oryx leucoryx), three maps and 30 other line drawings. The report has been subsidised by the Bahrain Government (the smallest state in the OSME area), which is an indication of the growing awareness of the environment by governments in the Middle East. The report is good value for money at £3 (cash) and this price includes airmail to Europe. The report may only be ordered from Bahrain Natural History Society, P.O. Box 20336, Manama, Bahrain, Arabian Gulf.

Mike Jennings

'Bird Killing in the Mediterranean' S Woldhek, 1979

Published by the European Committee for the Protection of Mass Destruction of Migrating Birds, this 62 page report is the fruits of two years of fact finding trips made by the author to the countries bordering the Mediterranean. The introduction says that it is written for conservationists, ornithologists, administrators and politicians in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. It is essentially a review of how migrant and resident birds fare in respect of mans hunting instinct, trapping resourcefulness and gastronomic demands in each of the countries bordering the Mediterranean, plus Portugal and Jordan (but excluding Gibraltar, Albania and Libya). For each country there are notes on the general awareness of the population towards birds and conservation, hunting and trapping practices and the economics of wild birds for country people. A particularly well documented section deals with the law concerning wild birds (sadly in most cases there are still only hunting laws), giving comprehensive data on close seasons and protected species. Law enforcement (another subject which is well covered) is unfortunately in many countries a mere shadow of the law. A final part gives notes on the conservation and ornithological societies and organisations in each country, in a few countries this includes the names of the one or two individuals who are 'doing something' in the way of bird protection.

Copies can be obtained from Alistair Gammell, c/o The RSPB, The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, England. Price is £3 plus 50p for postage and packing. (Please note cheques etc are to be made out to the RSPB and not OSME.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1981 Subscription

With effect from 1st January 1981 it has unfortunately been necessary to increase the annual subscription to £5.00 sterling. This rate will be maintained for 1981 and 1982. Members living outside Europe may receive publications by airmail for an additional contribution of £2.00

Overdue Subscriptions

There are still a few members who have not paid their 1980 subscriptions. If you are one of these, the Membership Secretary would be pleased to receive the arrears as soon as possible. Please note that 1981 subscriptions become due on 1st January.

Banker's Order Form

Enclosed with this bulletin many members will find a Banker's Order Form made out to show the new subscription rates which will take effect from 1st January 1981. (See announcement elsewhere in the bulletin) All members who have a sterling bank account are urged to pay their subscription by this method as not only does it relieve you of having to remember when and what amount to pay to whom but it saves the society a great deal of administrative time as well as expense on reminders. If you already pay your subscription by banker's order please complete and return a new form, this will automatically cancel your old order. It is regretted that for a number of reasons it is not yet possible for members without a sterling bank account to pay by this method.

Bird Voices of Central Asia

A gramophone record of wildlife recordings made in Tashkent and Azerbaijan: 22 birds (1 introduced, 1 domestic), 2 amphibians and 1 insect. Of particular interest are the Laughing Dove Streptopelia senegalensis, Common Mynah Acridotheres tristis, Small Skylark Alauda gulgula, Red-headed Bunting Emberiza bruniceps, Booted Warbler Hippolais caligata rama, Moustached Warbler Acrocephalus melanopogon, Eastern Stock Dove Columba eversmanni and Ruddy Shelduck Tadorna ferruginea.

The disc is a 12-inch diameter LP published in Moscow and called 'The voices of birds in nature: 6. Birds of Central Asia' (Russian). 10% discount is offered to members of OSME. The price, including p & p is £4.95 (after discount). Orders to: Jeffery Boswall, Birdswell, Wraxall, Bristol BS19 1JZ, Britain.

OSME Council - 1980-1981

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NB: Will members please note the new Sales Officer and Membership Secretary.

Data/Records collection

For members residing or observing in any of the Gulf States a special hand-out on where to submit records has been prepared and distributed. If any interested member has not received this please would they get in touch with me.

A comprehensive list of recording arrangements for all the countries in OSME's sphere of interest is in course of preparation. If any member has a special interest in any particular country they are invited to contact me.

Don Parr
Hon Sec

OSME Greetings Cards

This year we have again produced two OSME greetings cards for use by our members. The two illustrations are Western Reef Herons Egretta gularis (reproduced on page 1 of this bulletin) and a Blackstart Cercomela melanura (reproduced on page 16 of this bulletin) both by Steve Rooke. The message inside the card reads "Season's Greetings" and details of the society are given on the back.

The cards are available in packs of ten (five of each design) for 80p a pack (including postage) from the Sales Officer. (Orders from Europe - including Turkey - at £1.20 and outside Europe at £2.00 a pack to cover the cost of airmail.)

RAPTOR MIGRATION SURVEY IN ISRAEL

The Israeli Raptor Information Centre plans to conduct a survey on raptor migration through the Rift Valley between 16 February and 11 May 1981 and help is being sought from European ornithologists. Participation in the survey requires that a person spends two weeks watching, one on the edge of the Dead Sea and the other at Eilat. Provided the response is sufficient, observers will work in groups of 4 with 3 Israeli observers.

Accommodation will be provided, however a small cost of £1.50 sterling will be charged per day and the money used for raptor conservation projects in Israel. Also, for those who are interested, there will be a 2-day hike in the Judean Desert. Spring is particularly exciting in Israel and the numbers of raptors seen on migration higher than anywhere yet recorded anywhere in the world.

Anyone wishing to participate should write to the organiser, Yossi Leshem at I.R.I.C., Har Gilo Field Study Centre, Sak Na'ul, Jerusalem, Israel, giving preferred dates. Before doing so however, people may wish to learn further details in which case they should contact Richard Porter.

Visitors to Brittany and Burgundy

An OSME member, A J Braun of Castel, Pencadenic, Le Tour-du-Parc, 56370-Sarzeau, France, has kindly offered advice and assistance to members visiting Southern Brittany where he lives (Rhuys Peninsula (Presqu'ile de Rhuys)) or the Côte-d'or (Dijon) region.

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